On Feb. 15, President Donald Trump declared illegal immigration on the southern border a national emergency and claimed he now has the power to build a border wall.

The president is relying on a provision of general military law that empowers the president to “undertake military construction projects” during national emergencies that require “use of the armed forces.” The statute allows Trump to appropriate funds for the wall from the existing military construction budget.

But this authority, which has not been invoked since 9/11, is limited to projects “necessary to support such use of the armed forces” — and the army plays little role in border security. Still, supporters of the emergency maintain that the wall will help the troops Trump has deployed to secure the border.

Yet some lawyers argue that Trump has not cited a true emergency. These critics say that emergencies are limited to time-sensitive national security threats, threats the country can’t wait for Congress to address. They emphasize that Congress did address the issue, repeatedly denying Trump his border wall. And even Trump acknowledged that the border wall does not pose any urgent threat, saying, “I didn’t need to do this, but I’d rather do it much faster.”

Former prosecutor Deanna Paul has written, however, that the National Emergencies Act “gave the president unfettered authority to make a national emergency declaration and use specific statutory powers.” Paul emphasizes that the law did not establish any criteria for national emergencies. So judges have little basis on which to intervene.

The El Paso attorneys counter that, as the Supreme Court did in Sebelius v. Cloer regarding the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act, courts should apply the “ordinary meaning” of words not defined in the statute. Most would agree that the dictionary definition would restrict emergencies to situations demanding immediate action.

The president’s opponents also point to Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer as proof that courts can intervene. In this case, the Supreme Court rejected President Harry Truman’s attempt to seize private steel mills by invoking emergency powers. Truman did so to end a strike that he said would jeopardize the country’s military efforts during Korean War.

Nonetheless, experts like Paul point out that Congress hadn’t yet passed the National Emergency Act when Youngstown was decided. Paul argues that the

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President Donald Trump gave his second State of the Union address on Feb. 5, 2019 in the midst of the longest U.S. government shutdown to date. The President began by discussing what his administration had accomplished in the 2 years he had been in office. Trump celebrated his big tax cuts and the reduction in the unemployment rate in the United States.

Trump’s speech was the third longest State of the Union address, lasting a total of 82 minutes. Trump took the time in his speech to address the government shutdown, his plans for border security and the border wall, the economy and American jobs. He also announced his intent to hold another summit with Supreme Leader of North Korea Kim Jong-un, a summit that occurred on Mar. 2. Trump also asserted that he wouldn’t call a state of emergency yet in his efforts to build a wall between America and Mexico. He reneged on this promise, calling a state of emergency on Feb. 15, just 10 days after his address.

Trump also discussed many of the current crises in America, including the opioid crisis and the current War in Afghanistan. He also contended that while the administration was working very diligently to remove the many MS-13 gang members from the United States, without the improvement of border security, the constant influx will continue. “The savage gang MS-13 now operates in at least 20 different American states, and they almost all come through our southern border,” he added.

In the states’ lawsuit, the attorneys general argue that building the wall will detract from the amount of money their governments receive in federal funding. But courts might reject this claim under the “prohibition of generalized grievances” doctrine. According to this principle, harms that indiscriminately affect “all or a large class of citizens” don’t justify standing. So, harms to entire states may not merit standing.

So who will prevail in these cases? Harvard law professor emeritus Alan Dershowitz predicts that Trump will win because, historically, courts tend to defer to the president on national security matters. The Supreme Court upheld Trump’s travel ban last year based on this principle.

But University of George Mason Professor Ilya Somin sees this case as distinct from the travel ban case. He thinks Trump will lose, both because the plaintiffs have overcome the deference owed to the president and because the national emergency does not require the “use of the armed forces.”
On Jan. 22, Democratic Governor Andrew Cuomo signed New York’s Reproductive Health Act, affirming women’s right to abortions. The law’s enactment coincides with the 46th anniversary of when the Supreme Court established that restrictions on abortion that “place an ‘undue burden’” on women seeking abortions are unconstitutional.

Democrats and Republicans had debated the new law for the past 49 years. When the Democrats gained control of both houses of the legislature, they easily signed and passed the Reproductive Health Act.

Since the 1970s, the law has defined a “conduct which causes the death of a person or an unborn child with which a female has been pregnant for more than 24 weeks” as homicide. The old law permitted abortions within the first 24 weeks of the pregnancy, when the life of the patient is put at risk, or cases in which the fetus is inviable. Abortions performed after 24 weeks of the pregnancy were legal only if necessary to protect the mother. In all other circumstances, abortion was “criminalized.”

If an abortion does take place, the woman does not need to get consent from her parents or her partner after the age of 18. The new public health law requires abortions past 12 weeks to be performed in a hospital. And after 20 weeks, an additional physician must be present. The law also guarantees babies “immediate legal protection under the laws of the state of New York” once born.

The Reproductive Health Act allows licensed nurses, physician assistants and midwives to provide abortions. While New York State law had previously made it illegal to administer or take drugs to cause a miscarriage, this section of the law has also been repealed.

Many disagree with the new abortion law. Some people say that women use abortion to sidestep other problems. For example, Megan Clancy, a psychologist, said: “There are women who are starving who become pregnant; the problem is that they are starving, not that they are pregnant.”

There are others who oppose abortion due to its cost. Some also believe abortions damage the mental health of the mother. Still others say that abortion is the immoral killing of a human being, inflicts suffering on an unborn child and is unfair to those couples who are unable to conceive. Some people think that repealing abortions from the criminal code limits “prosecutors from applying criminal charges in the cases of so-called forced abortions, which can occur during domestic-violence cases when a woman loses a child during pregnancy.”

In contrast, pro-abortion advocates contend that the government should not dictate what a woman does with her body. Hillary Clinton explained, “I’m pro-choice, because I want people to make their own choices.”

Other supporters of abortion rights believe that the government should stay out of healthcare. These skeptics of bureaucracy point to the Charlie Gard case, in which a healthcare policy enforced by the British government prevented an infant from obtaining treatment essential to his survival.
Rock and roll has long been a genre wrought with the tension of the masses. Over the years, many groups have straddled the stairways of success and controversy, but in terms of ‘90s rock, Nirvana was a step above the rest. A simple Google search of the word “Nirvana” yields over 1 million results, spanning myriad dispositions from speculation to adulation to full on condemnation.

Regardless of dissenting opinions, 25 years later, such an influential band deserves a closer look; beyond the harsh sound and the tragedy of their final days lies a wealth of experience. Reflection reveals the depth of Nirvana’s career as a whole and the lasting imprint their work has left behind.

Nirvana began in Aberdeen, Washington, founded in 1987 by lead vocalist Kurt Cobain and bassist Krist Novoselic. Following a succession of drummers, Dave Grohl joined the lineup in ‘88, completing the roster. During the early days, the band also cycled through a series of name changes, considering monikers like “Fecal Matter” and “Skid Row.” The group ultimately settled on “Nirvana” because — according to Cobain — it was a “beautiful” name, not a “raunchy” or “mean punk” moniker.

Despite the band’s Aberdeen roots, it was the trio’s arrival in Seattle that saw their goals come to fruition. The city’s grunge scene was an active hotspot for ‘90s punk and saw the birth of a number of successful acts amid a vibrant musical subculture.

The decade saw the advent of minimalist genres, like grunge and new wave rock, genres that would thrust groups like Nirvana into the spotlight. With the stringent “hair rock” of the ‘80s — characterized by pop-influenced hooks often seen as placing style over substance — fading into distant memory, bands such as Pearl Jam, Alice in Chains and Soundgarden fused harsh, synthesized chords with punk and metal influences to create new sounds. With Nirvana at the helm, the so-called “Seattle sound” forged the way for contemporary rock music, bridging the divide between hard rock and alternative.

Although Seattle’s brand of rock took an overall minimalist approach, Nirvana infused grunge with a new spirit. Cobain, in particular, was resentful of the mainstream, consumerist records dominating ‘90s radio, records laden with software like “pro-tools” instead of instruments and other production features. Nirvana’s sound was unpretentious, focusing on the emotive spirit of music rather than letting production and profit dictate a song’s merit.

Throughout the group’s career, Cobain often spoke of how the members of the band remained true to themselves — and their dedication shows. Even on 1991’s “Nevermind,” their second and most “produced” album, tracks like “Something in the Way” and the iconic “Smells like Teen Spirit” are still relatively basic or “lo-fi.” In fact, producer Butch Vig had to convince Cobain to simply double track, or electronically layer, his vocals by citing John Lennon’s use of the production technique as justification.

Ironically, “Nevermind” was an immense commercial success despite the band’s “anti-establishment” persona. They sold an average of 300,000 copies each week by early 1992. “Nevermind” spent two weeks at No. 1 on the Billboard Top 200 and remained on the chart for a total of two years.

In the midst of Nirvana’s rise to fame, Cobain wed fellow musician Courtney Love, frontwoman of the punk band Hole, in February 1992. Later that year, the two had their only daughter, Frances Bean Cobain.

Though “Nevermind” cast them into the spotlight, Nirvana

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Great job, everyone! Despite how cliché the headline may seem, I couldn’t resist using the title of Katherine’s press-stopping article, especially since nothing else quite describes the phenomenon that the Miller Place Panther Players’ production of “Newsies” had been.

I do not use the term lightly: “Newsies” was, by all accounts, a phenomenon that shook the school. In my four years of attending Miller Place High School, I have never heard so much about a single production. Having friends in the show, I heard all about the rigors of rehearsals, through which everyone involved kept clawing their way back to the stage the next afternoon. Not only has the cast proven that they can memorize lines and master difficult choreography; but they have proven that they — like their fictional counterparts — are warriors.

Once the show was over, I also bore witness to the overwhelming, gushing pride of so many teachers who came to the show their support their students. I’ve heard the teachers praise those who were in the play and thoughtfully take the play into consideration when planning lessons and work-loads. But on top of that, there were grand speeches about how stellar everyone and everything was. The glowing admiration in their voices was heartwarming; I can only imagine how proud those within the production were upon hearing those words.

They all have a right to be proud. As a theatre-goer and actress myself, I was very impressed by the little things in the production, like how clean the harmonies sounded; how visually interesting the sets were, especially during the chase scene; how accurate and well-made the costumes and makeup were; and just how synchronized the choreography was. I can shamefully admit from experience that the trade-marked “Newsies’ jump” is challenging when you don’t know what you’re doing, and the cast managed to execute it perfectly — oftentimes in unison — probably around ten to twenty times in every performance. Along with the challenging choreography, the gymnastics served as a breath-stealing addition.

And, as someone familiar with many of the songs going into the show, I personally have to commend Joe Maronski on the high note at the end of “Santa Fe.” I had been looking forward to that moment in the show since I bought a ticket, and I was not disappointed. The crowd wasn’t either, it seemed, considering that I could barely hear the end of the song amid the audience’s unfathomably loud cheering as the curtains closed. Despite that one mention, I cannot commend one actor more than another. Every single person onstage can call themselves an immensely talented individual. That sounds disingenuous, but the ensemble was just as charming as the principal characters, a sign of a phenomenal production with remarkable direction.

I would also be remiss if I didn’t note the dedication and capabilities of the pit and crew. Without those behind the curtain, the actors would not be able to dance in the lights or reach the audience.
was by no means a one hit wonder. The band’s 1993 follow-up album, “In Utero,” was stripped even further, embracing a raw, unfiltered grunge sound. The 12 track records’ heavy instrumentation brazenly denounced society’s ills. Nirvana not only decried but challenged the rampant sexism in grunge culture.

For example, while on tour playing a major show in Buenos Aires, Nirvana took offense when the audience harassed the band’s specially selected opening act—an all female group. In what Cobain called a “mass of sexism,” the audience of approximately 60,000 people jeered and pelted the women with mud and rocks.

Instead of canceling the gig, the incensed trio decided to sabotage the performance. The band chose the rarities of their discography, playing the first notes of the iconic “Smells like Teen Spirit” before switching to tracks with which the audience was unfamiliar. Cobain even maintained short breaks between chords to glare at the crowd during the opening number and later called the experience one of the greatest he’d ever had.

Nirvana’s defiance continued on record as well as off. Inspired by the rape of a young girl they had seen on the news the year prior, the trio paid their respects on “Nevermind” with a haunting track simply titled “Polly.” Furthermore, “In Utero’s” infamous single “Rape Me” was the band’s definitive—and purposefully blunt—statement of their detest for men who abuse and prey on women.

Though their albums brought considerable fame, they also brought scrutiny, and Nirvana’s success soon began to impinge upon their credibility. In an interview with Rolling Stone magazine, Cobain said: “I don’t blame the average 17-year-old punk-rock kid for calling me a sellout ... I understand that. And maybe when they grow up a little bit, they’ll realize there’s more things to life than living out your rock & roll identity so righteously.” Though the band’s rise to stardom came with a change in lifestyle, they remained steadfast to what Cobain called the “duty of youth”: to challenge corruption.

Specifically, Nirvana took aim at the music industry itself. In fact, “Rape Me” was widely interpreted as a veiled metaphor for the perceived injustices of the press and for the power companies hold over artists, an interpretation shared by then prominent music network MTV. As such, the network forbade the band to play “Rape Me” at the 1992 Video Music Awards, prompting Cobain to play a few chords of the song “just to give (MTV) a little heart palpitation” before switching over to the more accessible hit “Lithium.”

While Nirvana’s relationship with MTV was rather strained, the band continued to make appearances on the channel. In 1994, Nirvana appeared on one of the network’s prominent programs, “Unplugged,” to perform an acoustic set in New York for a select live audience.

Within the four walls of the intimate venue, under somber blue mood lighting, the trio took center stage amid an array of string and metal. Surrounded by a sea of guitars, stands, drums, lilies and black candles, Cobain’s hunched figure clutched his acoustic guitar, flanked by Grohl, Novoselic and special guest Pat Smear. Cobain was in rare form as his raw vocals fueled the haunting melodies, now obscured by the band’s typical rage and noise.

Novoselic told the BBC's Seven Ages of Rock program: “I'll never forget after we did ‘Unplugged,’ how happy Kurt was. He was so happy ... He was relieved, and we pulled it off.” Not only was the “Unplugged” performance a staple piece of Nirvana’s career; but the appearance allowed the band to cross over into audiences previously put off by the dissonant aesthetics of punk music.

Though Nirvana was influential as a whole, one simply cannot discuss the group’s legacy without acknowledging the impact of its prolific frontman. Critics contest Cobain’s importance, asking: “What makes a 27-year old drug-addicted high school dropout screaming into a microphone even remotely remarkable? How was a man with only three complete studio albums labeled the supposed ‘voice of a gen-

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If you like books that keep you guessing, this may be a book for you. The book starts on Chapter 18, and you might question at first if there is something wrong with the book, asking yourself “Why does this book start with Chapter 18?” Well, dear friends, the author has decided to write this fast-paced novel by starting with the ending and then working back through a year in the life of Jule West Williams.

The story starts with Jule at a resort in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, where Jule has spent the past month. But why does everyone there call her Imogen? Imogen is supposed to be her best friend, or is she? And where did she get the money to pay for this resort? The secrets are revealed little by little as Jule travels from Mexico to New York, London and California. This journey is filled with action, adventure, violence and a bit of murder! It is a page turner as the reader tries to untangle the web of intrigue that the author has spun.

This book is written by the same writer who brought us “We Were Liars.” She does not disappoint with her latest offering. Come down to the library and pick up this book to see if you can figure out Jule’s secrets before they are revealed!

Newsies Stop the World - Continued from page 5

from the world they’re creating. And the pit was Broadway quality. Every year, they surprise me with how professionally they conduct themselves. Their skills set the framework for the actors to shine as they simultaneously glow brightly on their own. I give kudos to you all.

The dedication in this band of young actors never ceases to inspire me. On and off stage, the Miller Place Panther Players dedicate themselves completely to their shows. As an audience member, I have seen passion in the eyes of both graduated performers and newcomers, but in “Newsies,” the fighting spirits of the cast rose to a whole new level. Their synergy showcased the commitment they have not only to their craft, but to each other. They have knocked all expectations into the stratosphere, and it won’t surprise me to see any one of them making headlines when they leave Miller Place High School.
Despite popular belief, Cobain’s widespread appeal is not merely a symptom of the “ungrateful indifference” or “apathy” often attributed to younger generations. Sure, the press often portrayed Cobain as—to quote the singer’s journals—a “self destructive yet overly sensitive, frail, fragile, soft spoken, narcoleptic, neurotic, little pissant.” The media cannibalized his private life, reporting every scrap of information gathered, fact or fiction. But these things are ephemeral at best; occasional antics and questionable journalism may make a good story but don’t leave a legacy. The truth is often far more impactful.

Putting aside his talent and musical contributions, the longevity of Cobain’s legacy stems from what he represented for America’s youth. Generation X was the first confronted with a number of modern social issues, such as the splintering of the nuclear family. With their predecessors, the Baby Boomers, boasting the highest divorce rate of the last five generations, Generation X-ers felt an angry disillusionment with the world of their elders. Not only was their art a mirror for this frustrations; but in life, all three members of Nirvana were products of “broken homes.”

However, Cobain’s public persona was particularly paradoxical. He was self-aware, even resentful of the hardships of his generation, but at a loss as to what to do about it. Never proud or pompous, Cobain’s quiet intellect informed his casual demeanor, a demeanor often balanced by his frequent sardonicism. In fact, he was often openly resentful of the frequent attention garnered by life in the spotlight.

“People are treating (Cobain) like a god, and that pisses him off. They’re giving Kurt this elevated sense of importance that he feels he doesn’t have or deserve,” said Nils Bernstein, a longtime friend of Cobain’s, in a 1992 interview with Rolling Stone. Though Cobain undoubtedly sought success in his musical pursuits, he neglected the spotlight, either downplaying his musical prowess when praised or insisting he was just “OK.”

The artist was a poster child for contradiction, an incredibly successful “anti-rock star” who was ambivalent to fame and uncomfortable in the spotlight. His self-awareness, his reserved intellect and conflicted spirit captivated listeners because he reflected the experience of thousands. Who better to represent Generation X than a sharp but weary young man simply trying to figure it all out?

In addition to mirroring their struggles, Cobain modeled their aspirations. He may have maintained the persona of the enigmatic rockstar, but in reality, Cobain had no time for apathy. While he understood the jaded languor of youth, his passion would not allow the escapist mindset of complacency to go unchallenged.

In a 1991 interview, Cobain stated, “I’m disgusted by my own and my generation’s apathy. I’m disgusted at what we allow to go on, by how spineless, lethargic and guilty we are of not standing up against racism, sexism and all those other ‘isms’ that the counterculture has been whining about for years while they sit and enforce those same attitudes every night on their televisions and in the magazines.”

Cobain was unapologetic about his observations, and his frank assertions can also be seen in his writings. His personal journals are quite subversive, spanning a range of topics, from the erasure of minorities in modern music to the shame of America’s growing infatuation with consumerism.

Unfortunately, Cobain was ill-equipped to fell the many demons before him, throughout his life. Chronic gastric pain and a poor constitution made month long tours a grueling ordeal, especially when compounded by the musician’s opioid addiction. On April 5, 1994, Cobain was found dead—presumably by suicide—in his Seattle home with a shotgun wound to the head and heroin in his system. Though his death is often reduced to the typical tragic fallout of fame,
his long history of depression, stretching back to childhood, was likely a significant factor.

Cobain was succeeded by both his wife and daughter. Now 26-years old and on the cusp of her own musical career, Frances Bean Cobain bears a strong resemblance her rock star dad, in both her features and demeanor.

Additionally, though Dave Grohl and Krist Novoselic suffered the loss a friend, their passion for music endures. Refusing to retreat in the wake of Cobain’s death, Grohl formed the Foo Fighters in late 1994. What began as a one man project flourished into one of the most successful rock and roll bands of the 2000s, and Grohl’s freewheeling enthusiasm for both life and music has since earned him the title of the “nicest dude in rock.” After a stint away from music, Novoselic contributed to a series of bands over the years and ultimately became a member of Giants in the Trees in 2017. He also developed an affinity for political activism, with a particular focus on issues of censorship in the modern music industry. The two had a sort of reunion in 2014, playing together for the first time in over a decade for “Nirvana’s’ induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Ultimately, the story of Nirvana is one not of misanthropic loners or wasted potential, but of three friends who made great music, and dared to be authentically themselves while they did so. People make poor heroes and even worse villains; they can be neither blindly heralded for the entertainment’s sake nor reduced to the dismal outcome of their mistakes.

Nirvana’s legacy lives on today in its fans. This year will mark the 25th anniversary of Kurt Cobain’s death, but his music and all that came with it lives on. Even today many teens can be seen sporting the trademark dopey smiley face with their own grin to match. Today, Nirvana’s iconic trio is remembered as they were — as purveyors of inspiration and as the voice of millions.

Charlotte Gann

One Tangled Web

Have you ever wanted to be a superhero? Well, that role was thrust upon an unwilling 13-year-old boy growing up in Brooklyn, New York. Miles, who stars in Sony Pictures Animation’s “Spiderman: Into the Spider Verse.” Miles Morales’ life changed one day when he was bitten by a radioactive spider while painting graffiti with his uncle. Throughout the film, we see Miles’ connection with his father blossom from unacceptance to a close relationship. At the end of the film, his father even gives him a heart-to-heart pep talk. Though he doesn’t notice at first, Miles’ body begins to change after being bitten. His legs appear longer, his voice sounds deeper and his skin is drenched in sweat. While he initially thinks he’s going through puberty, his body is in fact trying to adjust to the bite of what he believed to be a regular spider. After returning underground to ask the spider about these changes, he encounters Peter Parker, alter ego, Spiderman. Miles discovers that he is just like Spiderman. Though Miles asserts that he does not want to be a superhero, Spiderman tells him he has no choice.

While engaging in battle with the Green Goblin, the Spiderman of Miles’ dimension dies, and standing at his grave stone, Miles meets another Peter Parker, who looks slightly different from the one 6 feet under. This Peter was accidently sent to Miles dimension, and every so often, he “glitches” from not being in his own universe. Throughout the movie, we find and meet other alternate universe versions of Spiderman, from one that comes from the future to one that doesn’t even have a speck of color in his appearance. While searching for a way to send all the different Peters back to their home dimensions, Miles discovers someone who would rather risk millions of lives than never see his family again.

This animated movie stars many familiar names in Hollywood as voice actors, such as Shameik Moore as Miles Morales, Jake Johnson as Peter B Parker, John Mulaney as Spider-Man, and even Nicolas Cage as Spider Noir. Stan Lee, the creator of Spider-Man, even makes a few appearances in the movie. “Spider-Man: Into The Spider Verse” also won Best Animated Feature in the 2019 Oscars.
Actors, actresses, musicians and more can all receive the highest honors during award season. Award season is one of the most important times of the year for celebrities and fans alike, and it never fails to spur its fair share of controversies and celebrations. The 2019 award season met each of these expectations. The Golden Globes, the Oscars and the Grammys are some of the most important awards celebrities can win. “A Star is Born,” “Bohemian Rhapsody,” “Greenbook” and “Roma” won big at many of the award shows. “Greenbook” won both the Oscar and the Golden Globe for Best Picture. Next, Rami Malek, the lead actor in “Bohemian Rhapsody,” won an Oscar for his performance. Additionally, the director of “Roma,” Alfonso Cuaron, won Best Director at many of the award shows, including the Golden Globe and the Academy Award. “A Star is Born” also won multiple awards for its original song “Shallow,” which Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper performed beautifully at the award show.

Beyond the celebration, every award season brings its list of controversies and scandals. The Grammys faced backlash when Ariana Grande, one of their set performers and a nominee, pulled out of the show suddenly. Grammys producer Ken Ehrlich said that the singer withdrew because she "felt it was too late for her to pull something together." Grande tweeted, however, that she pulled out because of a disagreement over which songs she could sing during the performance.

Overall, the 2019 award season was filled with big wins, surprises and scandals. Each new year, more predictions of who will win come out, and the excitement builds. If your favorite celebrity didn’t win this year, you’ll just have to hope for next year.

As Disney’s hit show “Andi Mack” enters its third season, the writers break another barrier in children’s TV. “Andi Mack” has covered many pressing issues while remaining enjoyable for children and young teens. The main storyline of Season 1 included a teen pregnancy, but that was just the start. The show covers learning disabilities, military families, money issues and — most recently — Disney’s first gay main character.

“Andi Mack” features a young girl named Andi who finds out that her sister is actually her mom, and that her grandparents adopted and raised her as their second daughter. The show follows Andi and her two best friends, Cyrus and Buffy, as they navigate the tough middle school years. In the first season, Andi meets a boy named Jonah, and they enter a will-they/won’t-they relationship. Eventually, the friendship blossoms into a romantic relationship. Yet at the beginning of Season 2, Cyrus reveals to Buffy that he likes Jonah. Cyrus later comes out to Andi and tells her that he likes Jonah, too. This marked the beginning of Cyrus’s character development.

Now, the show is on its third season, and Cyrus just came out to Jonah, actually saying “I’m gay.” Previously, Cyrus avoided the label and simply said that he liked a guy. Since then, Cyrus and a boy named Tj have been growing closer, and it seems that they will start dating. But no one can say for sure until one of them reveals his feelings. This relationship adds perfectly to the rest of the storylines in this already groundbreaking show. This open-minded portrayal of sexuality is good for all children to see and relate to. Hopefully, this show will leave a lasting impression on all of its viewers.
Ah, Valentine’s Day. A time to give over-priced goods to someone that you might not even love by the time the holiday rolls around next year. A time when you see couples enjoying more public display of affection in the hallways than usual. A time my mother tells me was fabricated by the card companies.

“If you love someone, you should show them that all year round, not on just a single day,” she told me on an afternoon close to the day of love. Quite frankly, I agree with her. The sheer bleakness with which people face Valentine’s Day is incredibly concerning while also being intensely hilarious. If I didn’t know any better, I would think that love was dead. Look no further than the list of creative, less-than-affectionate nicknames I gathered throughout the day for proof: “Lonely Day,” “Single’s Awareness Day” and “The Fake Holiday” are only a handful of the examples I encountered as I went about my day. This “fake holiday” seems to lack the emotion it once evoked, for the people who are meant to celebrate it look in the mirror will eventually be ironed out — or, better yet, you’ll learn to love them. Your personality will develop and mature, and your standards will improve the farther you get from the same population you’ve grown up with, and the closer you get to the diverse array of people you are bound to meet. Hormones trick us into feeling as if we need to expel some pent-up, restless love that we don’t understand, but I guarantee that waiting is almost always the better option.

Within the first hour ofbeing awake on the lovely holiday, I was treated to a half-joking rant about how men can be aloof. Shortly after that, I was flabbergasted by the barrage of people who were completely oblivious that the holiday was even happening at the time. I also managed to make a “Single’s Awareness Day” pact with a friend of mine. Sure, it must have been truly binding at the notoriously delirious time of about 7 in the morning, but strangely, I can’t remember what it actually meant. Even my best friend, who has had a significant other for two years, shamelessly admitted that she had no plans to celebrate.

Despite the antics of a few skeptics and those who thrive on complete apathy, I did hear of a few people who participated in their own ways. Apparently, “Galentine’s Day” is a thing, and I absolutely support it. Getting together with friends sounds like a wonderful way to surround yourself with love, which is always nice, regardless of what day it is. But this spin on the holiday recognizes platonic love, which is definitely not celebrated enough in our society.

If there is one sentiment to take away from this piece, it is this: Being single isn’t the end of the world, especially when we’re so young. The kids in our school who swear off love or decide they’ll never find it honestly make me laugh. People evolve; it’s a natural part of life. The physical flaws that make you cringe when you look in the mirror will eventually be ironed out — or, better yet, you’ll learn to love them. Your personality will develop and mature, and your standards will improve the farther you get from the same population you’ve grown up with, and the closer you get to the diverse array of people you are bound to meet. Hormones trick us into feeling as if we need to expel some pent-up, restless love that we don’t understand, but I guarantee that waiting is almost always the better option.

Personally, I like the Valentine’s Day. While it doesn’t get me a day off, it does get me candy. More importantly, it gives me an uncanny sense of independence. Feb. 14 reminds me that I don’t need a valentine to make me happy — especially since the relationship probably won’t even last until I graduate high school.
The year is 1940; the Allied forces are losing the war on both European fronts. France and Belgium have been taken over by the Axis powers. The citizens of England are constantly being bombed, making it impossible to stock the grocery stores with food; American ships are working tirelessly to supply bread, oil, weapons and other commodities to the starving English civilians but are continually torpedoed by German U-boats. While prospects for the Allied nations appear bleak, the tides of the war are about to change.

In 1936, Alan Turing’s Bombe machine would mark a turning point of the war. Prior to the advent of Turing’s brilliant machine, the Allies could not crack the code of the German Enigma machine. The Enigma was a cipher machine that created cryptograms, in which each character represented another letter or number. Only those who had the code key could read the cipher. This code key was changed each day at the stroke of midnight, making it virtually impossible to crack. The Germans had no concerns about transmitting top-secret information about the positions of their troops or the locations of their U-boats. They were confident that even if the Allies intercepted their transmissions, they would be unable to decipher them.

But when Alan Turing’s amazing Bombe machine was activated, the Allied powers held the power to win the war. With this secret weapon, the British could read intercepted enemy transmissions. Turing’s magnificent apparatus allowed them to locate German U-boats, read top secret documents and provide advanced notice to their troops about enemy sneak attacks. However, the British did not want the Germans to know they possessed a code-breaking machine, so they had to be strategic when using their secret weapon, sometimes suffering the loss of troops and innocent civilians to keep their weapon a secret. Without Turing, who knows what the outcome of the war would have been and how many more lives would have been lost!

Despite Turing’s groundbreaking achievement which saved the world from Nazism, Turing was arrested for his personal, private behavior. Prosecuted under the “gross indecency” clause of the Labouchere Amendment for homosexual acts, he was given the choice of either a year in prison or chemical castration. He chose the latter and was prescribed hormones to “fix” him. Additionally, Turing was permanently disqualified from participating in any future code-breaking work. Just sixteen days before his 42nd birthday, Turing took his own life.

The man who saved millions of innocent people from death and enslavement died without receiving the credit owed to him. The British government concealed Turing's mammoth achievement from the public until after his death when the British government declassified the information in the mid-1970s. Then, it took nearly another 60 years for Turing to receive acknowledgment for the work he had done on behalf of his country. Finally, in 2009, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown posthumously apologized to Turing for the manner in which the government treated him, and in 2013, Queen Elizabeth II pardoned him. While Turing’s story is certainly sad, at least we are now able to appreciate what Turing did for the free world — enable the Allied forces to win the war.
Mrs. Aitken was an active figure in the lives of many students while working at Miller Place High School. She was directly involved in student life and forged many meaningful connections to members of the Miller Place community.

To illustrate, she worked as the Gay-Straight Alliance club’s adviser. In this role, she organized many school-wide events such as National Coming Out Day, which celebrates LGBT+ acceptance, and the National Day of Silence, a day dedicated to raising awareness about suicide in the LGBT+ community. Her work in this club allowed Miller Place to become a more tolerant and accepting community, as well as a safe place for LBGT+ students. Gay-Straight Alliance club member Grace Patterson, fondly recalls working with Mrs. Aitken, saying: “She made me feel safe and made GSA one of my favorite after-school clubs. She always welcomed us with big smiles, and I knew even if I had had a bad day that I could breathe and be heard then in that club.”

She also served as the adviser to the Natural Helpers program, working with peer-elected students to help MPHS teenagers make healthier choices and solve problems faced by our community. She educated students on the dangers of drugs and provided mental health advice that fostered a positive social setting. She developed profound connections with these students, building trust and confidence with those involved in the Natural Helpers program. Natural Helper Julianne Cerato recounted: “Mrs. Aitken is one of the kindest, most genuine people I have ever met. Not only has she taught me so much about being conscientious and kind to others, she has helped me learn to be kinder and love myself.”

As student counselor, she influenced many students in positive ways. Her office was always a safe space where students could find refuge from their struggles and anxieties and confront important problems, such as family troubles, negative peer pressure and the unmanageable stress of high school stress. She encouraged positive mental and emotional health, commonly saying: “The only person you need to wake up with every morning you’re the rest of your life is you.” Students from the GSA club and Natural Helpers program wish her luck in her retirement, hope she enjoys time with her family and thank her for her incredible support and for the endless love she provided the community.
Popular razor company Gillette has wrapped itself in controversy with the release of an advertisement speaking out against “toxic masculinity,” violent or aggressive behavior seen in some men. The company primarily markets toward men with their slogan, “the best a man can get.” However, combats normalization of unhealthy behaviors in men and raises the question, “Is this the best a man can get?”

The 1 minute, 48 second “We Believe” ad is a statement against men’s bullying and sexually harassing the vulnerable. It denounces rationalization of these dangerous behaviors through sayings such as “boys will be boys” and encourages men to take action and speak up against physical bullying, catcalling and other negative behaviors. The ad also supports the #MeToo campaign and shows both men and women facing toxic behaviors.

The company has received public backlash for the ad in the form of boycotts and thousands of negative comments on YouTube encouraging consumers to avoid the company’s products. Some argue that the company needs to apologize to men and that is hypocritical to advertise equality while charging more for women’s razors.

Many say this message pushes the “feminization” of men in media. Competing razor company Bawty Barber tweeted that, unlike Gillette, they “understand how men work and don’t try to change them into women.” However, the commercial itself contradicts the frivolous claims that the advertisement is anti-men or shames masculinity by stating that some men are already actively working to shut down negative behaviors. It in no way asks men to turn away from their masculine characteristics. Instead, it challenges men to speak out against sexual harassment, assault and physical violence.

“The ad is not about toxic masculinity. It is about men taking more action every day to set the best example for the next generation. This was intended to simply say that the enemy for all of us is inaction,” the company said in a statement.

Despite the overwhelming negative backlash, Gillette’s sales have not suffered. It is unlikely the boycotters will deliver any effective damage over time. Most Gillette customers are seemingly indifferent about or are supportive of the anti-violence message.

Grace Patterson
Editor's Note: The views expressed in this commentary are solely those of the author.

Every year, as March approaches, many Americans begin to decorate and plan for St. Patrick’s Day. Americans hold parades and wear green and embrace their Irish Heritage on this famously celebrated holiday in the United States. Americans eat corned beef, cabbage and soda bread that tastes more like cake than bread, believing that they are Irish. But where did St. Patrick’s day start, and why is it so heavily celebrated in the US and barely in Ireland?

St. Patrick’s Day began as a holy day of obligation that celebrated Saint Patrick and his spreading Christianity to Ireland. Now, St. Patrick’s Day is simply a day to celebrate one’s Irish heritage. Many Americans stem from this lineage because of the waves of Irish immigrants who came during the Potato Famine. There were plenty of Italian immigrants, and many Americans identify as Italian today. So why is it more famous than St. Francis of Assisi’s feast day, the patron saint of Italy?

If it’s a day to celebrate heritage, why has it just become an excuse for people to feed into Irish stereotypes, dressing up like leprechauns and eating green bagels? This holiday has been inflated in America and now lacks any true meaning. Many in the country want to be Irish on this day even if they have no heritage at all. Over time, this holiday has become more of a joke than a real holiday.
James McCarthy

The Patriots defeated the Rams, 13-3, winning their sixth Super Bowl ring and tying Pittsburgh’s official record. Super Bowl LIII was undoubtedly an event where everything was done wrong, a fitting end to a season polluted by league-wide incompetence. Both teams’ offenses were, overall, awful.

While the Patriots offense seemed off their game, the Rams offense played like a Division 3 team that just got over hangovers. Rams quarterback Jared Goff was especially terrible. He misread several plays and made many inaccurate passes, including multiple missed throws to wide receiver Brandin Cooks, who would have otherwise scored, and a lob pass so high as to allow Patriots safety Stephon Gilmore to make one of the easiest interceptions in his entire life. When the Rams needed 2018 Jared Goff, they received 2016 rookie Jared Goff.

Star running back Todd Gurley, who previously stated that his knee injury wouldn’t affect his performance, was practically absent from the game. Teammate C.J. Anderson couldn’t produce anything of worth in the running game either. The only factor that kept the Rams from being blown out was their defense, which acted as a near-impenetrable fortress against the Patriots for most of the game.

For the first three quarters of the match, the Patriots offense, including quarterback Tom Brady, could not get their act together, but in the fourth quarter, they regrouped and decisively tore apart the inept Rams. Nonetheless, even running back Sony Michel’s winning touchdown was a tedious, standard two-yard rush to the end zone, a touchdown that failed to add any tension to the already uninteresting contest full of three-and-out drives with the most punt plays in Super Bowl history.

The defenses played as if it were the last time they’d take the field, yet they couldn’t save this game from complete mediocrity. It was like a sick joke from the league over what “defensive battle” actually means, for the defensive performances were the only salvageable highlights of the game. This is about what a cynical fan would have expected, considering that an uncalled pass interference penalty in the Rams’ NFC championship match gifted the team a spot in the super bowl and that the Patriots bested the Chiefs mainly because Kansas City’s defense collapsed in the fourth quarter.

Furthermore, the halftime show is cringe worthy every year, but this event’s show with Maroon 5 and rappers Big Boi and Travis Scott just seemed like an uninspired bore-fest for all parties involved. In comparison with other years’, the choreography and visuals were very plain — a simple M-shaped stage with flames coming out of it every once in a while. Adam Levine looked as if he didn’t even want to be there in the first place, wearing the same unenthusiastic facial expression throughout the entire show. The show was especially pitiful considering that, just two years ago, Lady jumped off the stadium roof from a bungee cord in a pyrotechnic-filled performance.

Scott’s single “Sicko Mode” was so abysmal, many fans were outraged that it took the place of a clip of the “Sweet Victory” scene from SpongeBob SquarePants. In addition, sports gamblers were more interested in how long the national anthem would last than the actual championship match.

Overall, Super Bowl LIII was the most dull and unexciting disaster ever to disgrace the largest annual sports event. Fans across the nation despised the show, including those of the Rams and the victorious Patriots. As the Patriots rode into the sunset with their new addition to their trophy case, they left behind the most colossal failure in NFL history.
EDWARD WHITLOW

Known to his friends as “Plank,” baseball player Edward Whitlow will be attending St. Joseph’s College, where he plans to major in nursing. He chose the school for its small size, proximity to home and great medical program. In college, Whitlow hopes to continue playing baseball, a sport he and his older sister began playing when he was 6-years-old. Seeing baseball as a stress reliever, Whitlow will best remember the camaraderie he has felt throughout “all the long days spent on the baseball field.” When he reflects on his high school career, the athlete believes his math and science classes have prepared him the most for the next four years of college. Whitlow fondly recalls speaking with his friends in between classes and looks up to his parents as role models, saying, “They always show me the right thing to do.” He added that Mike Trout is his baseball idol because “he lets his game speak for itself.”

“Hard work beats talent when talent doesn’t work hard.”
~ Tim Notke

EMMA ACEVEDO

Emma Acevedo will be attending Brockport College, a school she chose for its beautiful campus. Acevedo intends to major in physical education, a major she feels prepared to tackle thanks to her public speaking and gym classes. She intends to continue playing field hockey just as she has since Ms. Lamorte encouraged her to join the team in 10th grade. In addition to field hockey, Acevedo has played basketball and softball. But she favors field hockey for the aggressive nature of the game. So much so, she views winning the field hockey county championships as the peak of her high school career and sees Ms. Lamorte as a role model in her life, along with her older brother, Nick.

“You only see obstacles when you take your eyes off the goal.”
~ Henry Ford
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